

Protest at Fantino's Home this Sunday March 2 at noon.

Press Release - Feb. 28, 2008

Prior to our Flag Raising Event on Jan. 20, 2007, we offered Commissioner Fantino a way to end the protest simply by agreeing to meet to have 'Open and Honest Dialogue' as promised on the OPP's website ([link to page](#)) – he refused to have such a meeting and the protest went ahead.

The O.P.P. fulfills this commitment by providing the best and most professional service, possible, and by striving to build a culture of trust, and open and honest dialogue, with the communities it serves and among the people it employs.

The OPP has had many meetings with Native Protesters and Commissioner Fantino has even stated to the media that they have his personal cell phone number. In fact, the OPP has a whole team called ART (Aboriginal Respond Team) that works full-time to ensure that dialogue is being done with Native Protesters.

Meanwhile non-Native Protesters are repeatedly refused any meetings with the OPP. Mayor Trainer stated that even she doesn't have Commissioner Fantino's cell phone number.

On Dec. 1, 2007 OPP Officer Gutenberg told Doug Fleming, the organizer of the anti-illegal smoke shop protest, that he personally guaranteed that the OPP would sit down with Mr. Fleming by the end of the day to talk about the problem. Three full months later neither officer Gutenberg nor any other officer has spoken with Mr. Fleming. Mr. Fleming had been promised many times that the OPP would meet with him.

In November 2007 Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bryant visited Caledonia and his assistant took down people's names so they could have personal meetings with Mr. Bryant. Mayor Trainer stated on TV that Mr. Bryant would be meeting with Gary McHale. Three months later not one person has been called. Exactly which year were they planning on calling people for meetings?

We will try one more time to see whether the OPP or McGuinty Government are willing to live up to their word. If Mr. Fantino is willing to meet with the organizers of this weekend's protest then the protest will be called off. The residents of Caledonia have only wanted to be treated with some degree of respect. The residents wanted the OPP to live up to their own promise of 'Open and Honest Dialogue'.

Once again Mr. Fantino has an option of demonstrating that the OPP does not enforce a Two Tier Justice system. He can do this by meeting with non-Native Protesters in the same way he has met with Native Protesters. If it is reasonable and prudent for the OPP to meet with Native Protesters then why does he repeatedly refuse to meet with non-Native Protesters? Why does Fantino continue to provide a clear example of two separate policies when it comes to policing in Caledonia?

Since Mr. Fantino publicly and repeatedly stated that the OPP do not have a Two Tier Justice System then Mr. Fantino should be more than willing to meet prior to this Sunday's protest.

We hope the Media will watch Mr. Fantino's response to whether non-Native Protesters will be treated the same as Native Protesters. Will Fantino and McGuinty's Government give non-Natives the same respect they give Native people?

It is now up to Fantino to prove there is no Two Tier Justice in place.

Can the residents of Caledonia trust that the Media will repeatedly ask Mr. Fantino why he refuses to have any meetings with non-Native Protesters? Why does Mr. Fantino meet with Native Protesters throughout Ontario, yet refuses to meet with non-Native Protesters?